



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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May 8, 2020

Senator Ron Johnson  
328 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Tammy Baldwin  
709 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Mark Pocan  
1421 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Bryan Steil  
1408 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner  
2449 Rayburn H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Glenn Grothman  
1427 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Ron Kind  
1502 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congresswoman Gwen Moore  
2252 Rayburn H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Mike Gallagher  
1230 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Honorable Members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation:

We are writing you today to request that you prioritize higher education funding in the next COVID-19 relief legislation. We appreciate your leadership and advocacy during this challenging time.

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, our higher education institutions are faced with new and significant challenges, including strained financial resources and the logistics of transitioning to all distance learning. In recent weeks, the University of Wisconsin System has announced that it is expecting to lose approximately \$170 million in revenue from the spring semester alone due to COVID-19, and that is only expected to increase. This includes refunds for housing and dining services, as well as losses from college sports revenues. We hope we can count on your help to address these budgetary shortfalls.

We are grateful that the CARES Act provided a significant investment for higher education institutions, a total of \$186 million across all institutions. Specifically, \$47 million for student emergency grants and \$47 million for the UW System were provided through the CARES Act, and we appreciate your support. However, with an existing \$123 million shortfall across the System, more financial assistance is needed from the federal government to help keep our campuses across Wisconsin open and serving the state. Additionally, not all students in serious need of economic assistance were able to receive emergency grants.

On April 16, the Board of Regents unanimously approved a policy change that authorizes chancellors to create plans to furlough university employees to offset budget deficits. Several campuses have already announced plans for some level of furlough for hundreds of employees over the coming months – again, a trend we can only expect will continue. Our state's technical colleges have also spent millions of dollars retooling their programs during the COVID-19 crisis and could use additional support.

While UW-Madison is expected to account for the majority of this deficit, the state's other 12 universities and branch campuses are expected to split nearly \$70 million of the remaining losses. While the total revenue losses are lower for the smaller, regional campuses, the impacts will likely be more difficult for these campuses to overcome. Many of these campuses are already facing significant budget constraints and would be less likely to sustain any further cuts.

Last week, Governor Evers announced a 5% budget reduction across state agencies, including the UW System, due to projected revenue losses. This further compounds the financial constraints our campuses are facing, underscoring the need for federal assistance.

Our higher education institutions are an essential foundation and economic driver for our state. Every dollar we invest in our UW System yields \$23 in economic return, and all of our higher education campuses across the state provide crucial training and opportunities for the people of Wisconsin and beyond. We are counting on our Congressional delegation to work together to prioritize robust federal aid to our Wisconsin campuses and students.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to supporting the people of Wisconsin and our higher education institutions during these unprecedented and trying times.

Sincerely,



Katrina Shankland  
State Representative  
71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



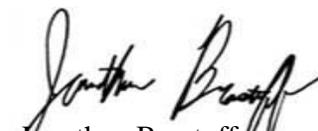
Jimmy Anderson  
State Representative  
47<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Jill Billings  
State Representative  
95<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



David Bowen  
State Representative  
10<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Jonathan Brostoff  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Marisabel Cabrera  
State Representative  
9<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Jodi Emerson  
State Representative  
91<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



Jason Fields  
State Representative  
11<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Evan Goyke  
State Representative  
18<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Staush Gruszynski  
State Representative  
90<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Gary Hebl  
State Representative  
46<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Dianne Hesselbein  
State Representative  
79<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



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State Representative  
54<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Debra Kolste  
State Representative  
44<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Nick Milroy  
State Representative  
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Greta Neubauer  
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66<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Todd Novak  
State Representative  
51<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

Daniel Riemer  
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Tod Ohnstad  
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78<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

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State Representative  
76<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

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8<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Tim Carpenter  
State Senator  
3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District

Dave Hansen  
State Senator  
30<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Chris Larson  
State Senator  
7<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Fred Risser  
State Senator  
26<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Jeff Smith  
State Senator  
31<sup>st</sup> Senate District

Lena Taylor  
State Senator  
4<sup>th</sup> Senate District